

Super Rich to Continue Spending at Undiminished Rates

NEW YORK, Oct. 8 -- As retailers and marketers brace themselves for a potentially devastating holiday season under the cloud of an increasingly global recession, a potential silver lining lies in the wallet of the very, very rich. Over two-thirds (70%) of those with a net worth of at least \$30 million project their spending through the end of 2008 to be on par with or greater than last year, according to the most recent Elite Traveler/Prince & Associates research conducted September 22-24, 2008.

The survey polled approximately 500 families with a net worth of at least \$1 million. Whether the super-rich can keep the economy, or at least the luxury brands going, remains to be seen, but 96.4% of these super-rich consumers plan to spend an average of \$108,100 just on jewelry and watches before the end of 2008.

Seventy-six percent (76%) of families with a net worth of \$1 million-\$10 million said they will spend less between now and the end of the year, as did a similar number of families worth \$10-\$30 million. Less than 1 percent of the "Middle Class Millionaires" or Aspirational Segments as they are commonly referred to said they would spend more. Only those worth more than \$30 million plan to spend the same or more as last year.

"The Elite Traveler/Prince & Associates research shows that a small percentage of consumers are still purchasing luxury goods and services at an undiminished rate, really just the very top of the economic pyramid," says Douglas Gollan, president and editor-in-chief of Elite Traveler. "Today, people in that exclusive \$30 million + segment continue to fly privately, and the private jet industry is healthy with more people flying privately than ever before. At the NBAA private jet conference in Orlando this week billions of dollars in orders for new private jets were placed. That the private jet industry is strong in the US and abroad, and that the super-rich are continuing their strong spending habits, are two pieces of very good news for Elite Traveler and its luxury marketing partners."

Between now and the end of 2008, 97.6% of those surveyed who are worth more than \$30 million plan to spend an average of \$77,300 on apparel and accessories, 34.9% plan to spend an average of \$42,500 on audio visual equipment, 31.3% plan to spend \$54,900 on luxury resorts and hotels, and 94% plan to spend an average of \$23,400 on the personal consumption of wines & spirits.